

REMARKS

Claim 1 is amended in order to more clearly define the claimed invention. It is believed that this amendment is fully responsive to the Office Action mailed on July 27, 2007.

The present invention of independent Claim 1 is to a joint connector block having a block body with a plurality of connector-fitting chambers arranged in a line on one side of the block body, for receiving connectors of at least one outside wiring harness, and a busbar-receiving part communicating with the connector-fitting chambers on an opposite side of the block body. A plurality of longitudinal busbars are provided, each of which includes at least one branch terminal projecting in the connector-fitting chamber and at least one pair of clip terminals situated on the side of the busbar-receiving part, and a plurality of lateral busbars, each of which includes at least one branch terminal projecting in the connector-fitting chamber and a connecting part to be connected to the pair of the clip terminals on the side of the busbar-receiving part. The lateral busbar is connected to at least two of the longitudinal busbars crossing the longitudinal busbars at right angles. The branch terminals of the longitudinal busbars and the branch terminals of the lateral busbars are arranged in a line in the connector-fitting chambers for connecting with connectors of the at least one outside wiring harness.

In the Office Action, Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. The Office Action alleges that it is unclear in Claim 1, lines 11-12 whether with “two longitudinal busbars crossing the longitudinal busbars at right angles” is referring to the same longitudinal busbars or to new second longitudinal busbars. Reconsideration and removal of this rejection is

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/556,358
Response to OA dated July 27, 2007

respectfully requested.

Claim 1 is amended to more clearly define the longitudinal busbars. In view of the amendments, removal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 10-12, 14, 16, 18 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakanishi (U.S. Patent No. 6,910,923) in view of Ozaki et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,160,274). Reconsideration and removal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

In reference to Claim 1, the Office Action alleges that Nakanishi teaches a block body (11b) having a plurality of connector-fitting chambers (19) arranged in a line on one side of the block body and a busbar-receiving part (11) communicating with the connector-fitting chambers on an opposite side of the block body, a plurality of longitudinal busbars (20, 30 and 32), each of which includes at least one branch terminal (21, 31, 33) projecting in the connector-fitting chamber and at least one pair of clip terminals (end portion of 21, 31a, 33a) situated on the side of the busbar-receiving part. A plurality of lateral busbars (1b), each of which includes at least one branch terminal (3 and 4), project in the connector-fitting chamber and a connect part (near lead line 14b) to be connected to the pair of the clip terminals on the side of the busbar-receiving part, the lateral busbar being connected to at least two longitudinal busbars (20, 30 and 32) crossing the longitudinal busbars at right angles, wherein the branch terminals of the longitudinal busbar and the branch terminals of the lateral busbars are arranged in a line in the connector-fitting chambers.

The Office Action further alleges that Ozaki teaches connector-fitting chambers (3a) receiving connectors (9) of at least one outside wiring harness (1).

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/556,358
Response to OA dated July 27, 2007

It is respectfully submitted that the Office Action continues to mischaracterize the fuse module of Nakanishi. Firstly, alleged lateral busbars (1b) do not connect at least two of alleged longitudinal busbars (20, 30 and 32), as claimed in the present application, as the fuses (1b) are not continuous between the alleged longitudinal busbars (20), as clearly shown by the gap between fuses (2) in FIG. 4.

Secondly, the Office Action now alleges (30 and 32) to be longitudinal busbars. However, as shown in FIG. 2 (a cross sectional drawing of the fuse module taken at 2-2 of FIG. 1) input-side busbar (30) and output-side busbar (32) are not arranged longitudinally and they are located outside of the alleged block body (11b), with only alleged branch terminals (31 and 33) extending into the alleged block body (11b).

Thirdly, the alleged branch terminals (21, 31 and 33) are not projecting in the alleged connector-fitting chamber (19), as claimed, but are projecting in the alleged busbar-receiving part (11), as shown in FIG. 2.

Lastly, the alleged branch terminals of the longitudinal busbars (21, 31 and 33) and the alleged branch terminals of the lateral busbars (3 and 4) are not arranged in a line for connecting with connectors of at least one outside wiring harness, as claimed. In view of the above remarks, removal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 10-12, 14, 16, 18 and 20, as amended, in addition to allowed Claims 3, 8, 9, 13, 15, 17 and 19, are believed to be patentable and early action towards allowance is respectfully requested.

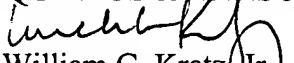
U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/556,358
Response to OA dated July 27, 2007

If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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